

# UNITY

AND THE UNIVERSITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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NEVER was there less to justify the attempt to divide the Unitarian fellowship by a geographical line than now. There is no east or west in the tendency to recognize Unitarianism as a greater ethical movement in religion than a doctrinal one. The *Register's* noble statement quoted in our last anticipated by a week the declaration of the Western Conference.

Unitarianism is that free and progressive development of historic Christianity, which aspires to be synonymous with universal ethics and universal religion.—*Christian Register*, May 6, 1886.

Resolved, That the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all who wish to join it to help establish truth and righteousness and love in the world.—*Adopted by the Western Unitarian Conference*, May 13, 1886.

THE interest of the laymen in the last conference was a most hopeful symptom. Dr. Robbins and J. N. Spriggs, of Quincy, J. A. Roche, of Chicago, and others were vigilant and effective workers on the floor of the conference throughout the entire session.

REV. MR. JUDY, of Davenport, was one of the most active in the struggle for a free and unlimited fellowship. He presented early in the conference a series of resolutions embodying in a more scientific and lengthy form the essential principles represented in Mr. Gannett's resolution; but he suppressed his own and helped along the work of the conference much by his attention and knowledge of parliamentary usages.

SOME two or three years ago we wrote in these columns, "The women of our Unitarian churches have something to say but they do not yet know how to say it in public." We have felt for some time that it was almost time to take it back. In the light of the Cincinnati Conference

the time has quite come. The women both with their extempore and written words demanded a hearing and commanded attention. And the men spoke none the less excellently for this help from women.

AN interesting touch of the humanities was that at Cincinnati when the women of the Western Conference bore their testimonies against the sacrifice of birds for ornamentation. Miss F. F. Chapin, of Cleveland, was requested by the Sunday-school Society to prepare a tract on the subject to be distributed among the girls of our Sunday-schools. Why not extend this tract idea and begin this year a series of children's tracts that will carry the gospel of truth, righteousness and love into the Sunday-school?

A CORRESPONDENT from the far west calls for a tract that will "arouse to consistent action a very large number of people who believe that *principles*—not dogmas—are the only true and solid foundation of worthy character and enlightened, progressive society. What immeasurable good would be done by an appeal pertinent, clear and strong enough to induce them to organize upon such a basis for the promotion of the highest human well being, and no longer suffer themselves to remain in selfish isolation, or their time, energy, influence and money to be misdirected and misspent upon institutions built upon dogma and superstition."

To the above call we make a hearty second. We believe that in every community there are those who might be aroused to such co-operation: nay, who will arouse themselves as soon as they become confident of the possibilities of a sure, loving fellowship and co-operation in this work. With a view of developing both the thought and the purpose in this direction we shall begin in our next issue the publication of a series of editorials that will embody the substance of the address given by our senior editor in Cincinnati last week, on "The Unity Church Possible in Every Community". For these articles we bespeak the especial interest of our non-churched readers who live in religious isolation. We hope that a year from now UNITY will find itself Father-Confessor and Bishop Extraordinary to a number of Unity Sunday Circles throughout the west.

THERE is often a sweet force in antagonism when put into the form of a question. The "sledge-hammer blows" about which men are wont to boast are neither more nor less, it not rarely proves, than a sort of intellectual brutishness which has no respect for anything standing in its path. It is a mistake we are prone to indulge to give witness of our thought in this way, and yet the fellowship we seek to build upon it is found under such a sponsor to be impossible. Intellectual decision and intellectual barbarism are different things.

H. L. T.

ONE of the suggestions made at Cincinnati, which must some time ripen to a deed, was that of a Post-office Normal Class for Sunday-school teachers, to be conducted, somewhat on the plan of the Boston Society for Home Studies, by reading-programmes and correspondence with



a class leader. It would do great good, could some system of normal training for our scattered teachers be devised; and something akin to it for young men and women, who cannot stop to go to the schools that fit the ministers for work, but who at home might fit themselves, if guided, to start just such village "Unity Sunday Circles" as Mr. Jones pictured in his paper,—to serve in such and very likely be found later ministering in city pulpits. G.

At the risk of reiterating what is said in another column of the meeting of the Sunday-school Society we venture to print the following characterization of that meeting from the pen of a friend: "As uniformly happens, those delegates who staid to the Sunday-school Society's meeting on Friday morning enjoyed the most home-like session of the Conference, the one with the most fun and life and go to it. In part it was the songs we sang, as one or another called for them; in part that every one had to do something by answering in writing certain Sunday-school conundrums that were broached. One of the best summaries of experience we have yet had came from our Sunday-school secretary, Mrs. Leonard; Miss Southworth's paper was wise all over, but very wise in spots, about the two sides of the Sunday-school opportunity,—the Worship side and the Instruction side. Perhaps she spoke for the ideal rather than the actual school, but that was all the better for those who enjoy the work of making ideals actual."

LAST Saturday witnessed the unveiling of the Schiller monument in Lincoln park. The monument is a beautiful contribution to the city from its German citizens. Fortunately the event is as creditable to art as it is to the spirit of patriotism and loyalty. The bronze statue, ten feet high, was cast at Stuttgart, in the same mould as that which stands at Marburg, the birthplace of Schiller, and was the work of Ernst Rau, who had opportunities to study the great German in life. The poet is represented in the twenty-seventh year of his age. Owing to the fortunate preservation of the mould, the Schwabenverein of Chicago, the society of Suabians, Schiller's immediate countrymen, were able to present the statue at a cost of \$3,000, the other German citizens of Chicago providing the granite pedestal twelve feet high. There was religious as well as political wisdom, piety as well as statesmanship in the remarks of Mayor Harrison, who gave the opening address. He said, "Schiller loved liberty, but it was liberty with art, liberty with law; Schiller fought for free speech and free thought, but these reined in by art and truth. Under the guidance of Schiller anarchy disappears and law and progress rise in respect." Mr. William Rapp made the leading address, closing with the prophetic words of the poet himself:

"This century  
Is not mature for my ideal. I live  
A citizen of those who are to come."

Few of those assembled probably realized it or lived up to the dignity of the occasion, yet they took part in the ritual of the universal church when they did honor to the uncanonized saint whose name belongs not to Germany but to humanity.

We are glad to observe the unanimity with which the press, both religious and "secular", endorses the movement now making at Harvard university to quicken the religious life of the college—a movement quite in the line of policy we have all along advocated, but which, we believe, has never been carried out in any American institution of learning so fully as the Harvard authorities now propose to carry it out. While we are by no means convinced that President Eliot has been wise in his wholesale introduction of electives into the lower classes in college, yet, on the other hand, we have not been able to see either reason or justice in his strenuous opposition to every movement for making the religious exercises of the college elective. Indeed the president's inconsistency in maintaining such

opposite attitudes upon these two phases of one and the same question has been one of the puzzles of his administrative policy. But spite of the opposition of the president, and of a majority of the board of overseers, the movement for voluntary attendance upon prayers and other religious exercises has increased in momentum with every year for the last six years, till the question became the crucial one of the policy of the college. Recently a committee of the overseers upon the state of religion in the college was appointed, and this committee, after carefully investigating and considering the subject, has made a partial report of a plan by which it is hoped the contending factions may be harmonized. The plan proposed, while it does not contemplate making religious observances wholly voluntary, can hardly fail to introduce a larger degree of spontaneity into the religious life of the college; and so we believe it is a step in the right direction. The Plummer professorship of Christian morals, with which is associated the university preachership, vacant since the retirement of Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, has been filled by the appointment of Prof. Francis G. Peabody, already a member of the faculty of the divinity school. With him are to be associated five other clergymen, chosen annually from the various Christian denominations, and elected for their gifts as preachers and their ability to influence and benefit young men. To Professor Peabody and these associates, forming in effect the faculty of a department of religious instruction, will be given large freedom in the conduct of their work. May we not believe that it will be prosecuted in the best and broadest Christian spirit, and that if it is so prosecuted the results achieved will be such as to lead our other colleges, especially those of the stiff-necked sort, to adopt a broader and more Christian basis of religious work? C. D.

#### THE WESTERN UNITARIAN ANNIVERSARIES.

HELD AT CINCINNATI, MAY 11-14, 1886.

Unfortunately for our readers, UNITY reporters at the Conference were also Conference voters, talkers and workers, so that the nerve, energy and brain vitality that ought to crowd the columns of this issue with the sayings and doings of a Conference, that will be ever memorable to those who participated in it and one that will mark an important epoch in the history of Unitarianism in the west, were largely expended upon the floors of the Conference, whose programme held the delegates in full and earnest attendance through eight long sessions. Most of the papers there read we hope will eventually find their way into our columns, and the full official proceedings of the meetings will appear in the annual Conference number, as soon as the Secretaries shall be able to edit the same. Meanwhile we offer our readers the following sketches of the work done by the three societies prepared for us by three faithful co-workers.

#### THE WOMEN'S WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE

opened Wednesday morning with a few remarks by the president upon the subjective missionary work to be done by the members. Realizing that the most successful efforts are the outgrowth of high individual development, attention was called to three lines which this development should take—growth in intellectual perception of truth, in kindliness of feeling toward the world, and in just and benevolent activities. Habits of justly considering even the details of life were urged as a suitable preparation for that clearness of vision and correctness of judgment which will enable the human mind to comprehend and weigh evidence upon great subjects. Accompanying this intellectual activity should be the faith which, looking up with loving trust, is willing to be led into all truth. It was shown how the cultivation of kindliness of feeling would destroy revenge and retaliation and produce a heavenly harmony in our social and domestic life, and that the growth of just and beneficent activities is dependent upon wise methods as



well as good motives, and that poor judgment leads to suffering and crime. Words of warning were uttered against that infidelity which is unfaithful to convictions and responsibilities, and that atheism which, in discontent and despondency, declares there is nothing to be relied upon in this world, that good effects do not follow good causes, and that loses sight of the power which makes for righteousness.

The report of the corresponding secretary showed that the work of the Conference had increased during the year. It is evident that this success is owing to her zeal and energy. And we trust that her withdrawal from office will make others feel the responsibility of carrying on the work. During the year the Conference has published "Suggestions for Post Office Mission Workers", "Programmes of Religious Study", and Mrs. Sunderland's address upon "Religious Study Classes", which has proven an excellent help in the Conference work, and which may well be re-read by our members.

The report from state directors showed that the general work is still progressing in the western states. The treasurer's report was encouraging, as the receipts were sufficient to cover all the expenses of the year.

Additional committees were appointed, one at the suggestion of Mrs. Sunderland, to secure as far as possible the establishment of religious study classes in all our churches and to interest isolated individuals in pursuing by themselves the programmes of study prepared by the Conference. Among the most valuable papers read before the Conference was one by Mrs. J. C. Learned, of St. Louis, upon the "Spiritual Life of the Church". From the depths of a soul at peace with itself and with God there came helpful words to comfort and to stimulate other souls. The power and the value of a religious life were most forcibly portrayed, not only by the words uttered, but also by the pervading spirit of the writer; and the practical suggestions for sustaining the spiritual life of the church must have commended themselves to every hearer. Very empty seemed the rivalry of worldliness in comparison with such true living.

During the hour devoted to Post Office Mission work, Mrs. George Thornton, of Cincinnati, gave in loving and tender words a brief memorial of Miss Sarah Ellis and her faithful efforts in the Mission. Then Mr. Judy reported the work of the year, and suggested that money was needed. To this the friends of Miss Ellis cordially responded, and the immediate demands of the enterprise can now be met. The election of officers closed the business of the Conference—the chief change being caused by the refusal of Miss Le Baron to be re-elected secretary. This was very much regretted, but Miss Mary H. Graves, of Chicago, who takes her place, brings an experience in public efforts and a devotion to the cause which must secure a faithful and successful continuance of the Conference work.

C. A. W.

## THE WESTERN UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Sunday-school society is the healthiest and most promising child of the Western Conference; which is only to say, without implied disparagement of any other department of work, or kindred association connected with the parent organization, that the work of the Sunday-school society being purely educational, aiming to instruct and thoroughly ground the minds of the young in the principles of a liberal faith, stands second to none in importance, and carries its own inspiration along with it. This inspiration is one that grows and kindles us anew at each recurrence of its yearly anniversary, when the reports of work accomplished and plans for more to follow show the constant progress of the cause for which the society stands.

The Sunday-school society held two meetings at Cincinnati, the first on the second evening of the conference, and under the charge of the president, Mr. Blake. The exercises began with one of the services from "Unity Services

and Songs", after which Mrs. Jones, of All Souls church, Chicago, read a paper entitled: "The Child in the Church: Christening and the Early Years", in which she made a plea for the more careful, though not forced, early religious education of the young, with the use of some simple form of a christening service, to perpetuate the impressions thus gained, and by means of which the child would be made to feel itself a living and responsible factor in the church. Mr. Learned, of St. Louis, followed in the line of the same thought, under the theme "The Covenant or Confirmation Age", giving us one of those clear, thoughtful papers, earnest and spirited in tone, which we have learned always to look for from this source. Mr. Learned believes that some simple form of covenant, which shall bind the young, growing life of the church to those principles of a rational and progressive religion in which it has been bred, will be very helpful, both as an educational influence, and to the end of giving the younger members of the church a better idea of their own responsibility towards it, serving to enlighten them as to its real needs and meaning, and at the same time to develop the sense of personal loyalty and ownership in the faith for which it stands.

The business session of the society was held Friday morning, after the close of the Conference the evening before. A long and full account of the year's work was presented by the secretary, Mrs. Leonard, and a few words were spoken by the president on the relation of the family to the Sunday-school. The treasurer's report revealing a deficit of something over a hundred dollars in the society's accounts, a part of this sum was made up in contributions and new memberships secured on the spot, and it was decided to raise the rest by an appeal to the Sunday-schools; while it was urged that in order to promote the feeling of kinship between the schools and the society the former be asked to assist regularly, either by means of some entertainment given for that purpose, or by voluntary contributions, in the defrayal of the latter's expenses, a suggestion which was cordially received by the representatives of the schools present, and will doubtless be acted upon. The special treat of this session came in Miss Southworth's paper on the relative value of worship and instruction in the Sunday-school. The essayist began by saying that she preferred to word her title differently and speak of the absolute value of worship and instruction, relative values being always difficult to estimate, and impossible to agree upon. The paper was all that could be desired both in the thoughts expressed and the method of treatment, the writer admitting all that could be urged in favor of the spiritual culture that comes through the observance of forms, and frequent repetition of the words of hymn and prayer; but abated nothing in the belief that the main purpose of the Sunday-school is instruction, and that the ends of a true and heartfelt worship are best secured by a clear knowledge of the thoughts and things for which the church stands. The election of officers replaced the old, faithful workers in their former positions of trust and responsibility, so that the society starts on a new year with renewed promise of usefulness and good.

C. P. W.

## THE WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.

The tornadoes kept to the north of us, though twice the heavens opened above the city, and once to pelt it with a hail storm straight and mad as Gatling guns could send. A slow earthquake, also, was in process in the streets, which were torn up for re-pavement. So between the gloomy skies, the hinder to the horse cars, and the distance of the parish homes from the down-town church, it was well that so many of the delegates met in the hotels. A real part of the pleasure of the Conference was in the comradeship at the hotel,—like that which makes so much of the good time at the Saratoga meetings. The hospitality is pleasant, too, and enables some to come who could not otherwise attend; and yet this Cincinnati precedent, established half by accident, it may be well to follow deliberately in



the future. The noon-time welcomes, greetings, lunches are still left to the kindness of the inviting church, and these, as usual, we enjoyed from kind faces and kind hands at Cincinnati.

Between eighty and ninety accredited delegates were present, and most of these were on hand by Tuesday evening to receive the good of the quiet, wise words with which our gray-haired veteran from Buda told us his "Experience of Thirty Years in the Western Ministry". The retrospect became a prospect to his listeners, as he hinted the undogmatic, unambitious ways in which by simple, persistent trying to help all around he had *grown* his prairie parish, and kept it so uniquely his through the shiftings and driftings of a whole western generation. Our readers have seen this sermon by Mr. Covell in the last UNITY; and in a week or two the "Conference number" of UNITY will contain the various reports to which we listened Wednesday morning, when the W. U. C. and the Women's W. U. C. held their business sessions. The two presidents gave each a word of cheer, the faithful, hard working secretaries had each a forward looking report of the work done during the year gone by, and the two treasurers reported with the usual promptitude and emphasis the fact that a deficit existed in their treasuries,—which deficits the respective Conferences faced with equal promptitude and emphasis, and in about two winks abolished. Mr. Sunderland told us that this last year had been our best year in church building, and traced the bright news partly to the church-loan fund started in the east; told us, also, of a generous gift of \$3,000 from the trustees of O. B. Frothingham's former society in New York,—and the Conference voted to invest it, using only its interest at present, hoping that so fair a nest-egg might tempt remembering friends to lay others by its side. And he told us of his new magazine, "The Unitarian," not born in office hours, but to be accounted part of his best work this year. His two most important suggestions for the future sought to carry one step further those that he proposed a year ago. They were (1) to increase the connection of the W. U. C. with the A. U. A. by not only as now dividing the Secretary's time and his salary, but also dividing his nomination between the two societies. This proposal was referred to a committee of two to report next year. (2) To declare in some non-credal but all-covering way the theistic and Christian position of the Conference. This proposal gave rise to the discussion referred to below. At another hour two of the state missionaries, Mr. Effinger of Illinois, and Mr. Jennings of Indiana, described a vigorous year's activities as carried on by them; and the publication committee announced that twenty new tracts, ten in the "Unity Mission" and ten in the "Unity Short Tract" series, had been printed, and that the year's distribution of the western tracts had amounted to 23,000. And during all the Conference hours these tracts, together with their A. U. A. cousins, and the publications of the Sunday-school societies, and the various Study Class helps, and the Post-office Mission documents, and much besides of missionary printing,—not to forget a well stocked "Book-Shelf of the Liberal Faith",—were making silent presentation of themselves upon the entry tables—a dumb menagerie of missionaries. For further news of all this reported work of the year we must refer to the "Conference" UNITY.

Now for a word about the papers read. *Constructive Church Life* seemed to be the underlying subject in the minds of those who planned the programme. At least, five of the promised papers looked in this direction. "The Child in the Church" was a topic which Mrs. S. C. Ll. Jones and Mr. Learned divided between them. Mrs. Jones took the mother end of it, "the Early Years", and gave a mother's wisdom about the art of impressing the little ones religiously by the constant life-touch rather than by rite or formula or doctrine. Mr. Learned, to the natural sacraments at birth and marriage and death, advised the adding of another to mark the birth of the youth into its manhood or its womanhood, and hinted the elements of a fit

service for such an hour. The next morning Mrs. Learned took up the central theme under the aspect of "the Spiritual Life of a Church", and described the inward quickening forces of thought, heart and character, which a true "church" generates and applies—this in contrast to the outward tests of popular repute and social success. These papers were given under the auspices of the W. W. U. C. and the W. U. S. S. Sy., and are mentioned under these heads. Then, on Thursday evening, Mr. J. Ll. Jones told how this inward true church-life might humbly and quietly begin at every cross-roads where three or four earnest people could come together. "The Unity Church that is Practicable in Every Community", he named his subject,—that Unity Church which, without christening itself by the *ism*, or by any dogma, would practically live its way into the Unitarian fellowship by emphasizing the same great principles and thoughts and hopes and charities as we: this church he traced in its germinating stages,—first in a neighbor's parlor, then in some home-room of its own, then in a little hall niched in the corner of the new block that the village rich man was building, and so on. And here Mr. Silsbee, a Chicago architect, was to have taken up the tale and told us by word and picture how such a baby-church as this, with a baby's purse, could cheaply, cosily, prettily cradle itself in this corner hall, or, one stage-farther on, in a little church-home of its own; but this chapter had to go untold, and Mr. Silsbee yet must give it to us. "A Needed Reform in Church Architecture" was the chapter-heading.

The missionary heart of the Conference spoke itself out in two Post-office Mission papers,—one a memorial tribute to the little mother of the Mission, Miss Sallie Ellis, to whose face many of us must have bidden silent good-bye a year ago at the St. Louis Conference; the other, a paper by Mr. Judy, who also contributed a pamphlet—a perfect treasure-chest of practical "Suggestions" for P. O. M. secretaries and committees. Side by side with this pamphlet appeared, in "short tract" form, the "Tract Directory", reprinted from the columns of a recent *Register*, and described in our last issue. These two P. O. M. tools ought to set a "mission" going in every church among us by showing just what to do, and how to do it. Against twelve missions reported in the west last year, this year reports twenty-seven, and others starting, a joint diocese of 1814 recipients of literature, and a distribution of some 32,000 tracts and 42,000 papers.

One of the most impressive papers of the Conference came with a welcome guest from the east,—Christopher Eliot of Dorchester. Each time he spoke, the welcome deepened; but the special subject which he brought was "Temperance Work in Unitarian Churches—Why? What? How?" A right moving plea for his "why"; a clear, strong "what"; and practical suggestions for his "how", based on successful experience in his own church and Sunday-school. He proposes a temperance society guarded from certain real objections that belong to the common society. No child can join without a consent-paper from the parent; and the pledge—which is one of total abstinence for children, and of total or partial abstinence for adults according to their conscientious judgment in the matter,—is not for life, but expires on surrender of the card of membership. Mr. Eliot not only brought his paper but brought it printed, and after the hearing came the pocketing all round of a copy. But the delegates may find that, on the same day when they listened, five copies were mailed to all the parishes from the Dorchester Society, who have enlisted with Mr. Eliot in an earnest *try* to get this question home to our ministers and teachers and parents,—the question, Are we Unitarians standing *nowhere*, or standing for the *victim*, or standing for his *tempter*, in this matter? The question is perhaps to be presented to the Conferences in the east, and our own Conference appointed a temperance committee to urge it in the west. We shall be glad to mail the pamphlet free to any one who sends request for it to UNITY office.



The story of the Women's meetings and those of the Sunday-school are given above. But though our special story here grows long, we have yet to tell that part of it for which the Cincinnati Conference of 1886 will be remembered,—the discussion of the so-called "issue in the west". A year ago, at St. Louis, the Secretary brought the question to the front by frankly stating his belief that, as he called it, "the non-theistic and non-Christian position of the Conference, and the tendency of Western Unitarianism, were wrong and misleading", and that he, if re-elected Secretary, must steadily work to set it right in these regards. Conscientiously he has kept his word. The result has been the "issue", the discussion in our papers, friction in the work at the head-quarters, an ache in some of our western churches, an impression spread in the east—almost deliberately spread, we fear—that western Unitarians were losing theism and worship. The Conference just held at Cincinnati was looked forward to with dread. Should we face the issue squarely there, at the risk of warm debate and hurt to hearts all round? Some of us hoped that it might pass again. The Directors arranging the programme purposely omitted it. But the hope failed. On the eve of the Conference, three or four days before it met, the Secretary surprised us all by publishing and mailing in all directions to the churches a pamphlet called "The Issue in the West. Is western Unitarianism ready to give up its Christian character? Is it ready to give up its theistic character?" And when, at the Directors' preliminary meeting in Cincinnati, he read to them his year's report, it contained a long section devoted to this subject. All this in conscientious keeping of his St. Louis word: whatever powers of judgment or misjudgment the Secretary has displayed in all this matter, we believe he has acted in it according to his own best light. This sudden pamphlet, and the renewal of the subject in his official report, made longer silence foolish on the part of those who hoped for peace.

Accordingly the Conference took action. Parts of four different sessions were given to the debate. It was frank, unflinching, with scarcely an exception courteous, throughout. So many differing opinions and plans were urged that the matter was thoroughly sifted, the real point at issue stated and restated, and the final votes took place at the true line of cleavage,—making those votes the more significant. At the very first session, Tuesday afternoon, the "Ministers' Fellowship Meeting" (open, however, to all), the leader, Mr. Utter, said truly, One question is at the heart of all of us. Still all hesitated. Two or three subjects off the point were broached, but each time silence fell. And then all turned and faced the question. Faced it in the very form in which the cover of the Secretary's pamphlet put it, quoted just above. The first speaker said that Mr. Sunderland had misconceived, and so misrepresented, the whole matter in his double query; that the "issue" was not one of theology—for with scarcely an exception all believed substantially alike, and this fact was well known,—but was, whether we would base our Unitarian fellowship upon theology at all. He explicitly answered the pamphlet's queries: "Is western Unitarianism ready to give up its Christian character?" No. "Is it ready to give up its theistic character?" No. But these did not state the point at issue, which was: Is western Unitarianism ready to *exclude from its full fellowship those who do not take the names of Christian and Theist?* That was the real point, and to this again the answer was, No. This opened the debate,—which of course we cannot follow here. Many took part in it,—eighteen or twenty of the ministers, eight or ten of the lay men and women: among the ministers, Bixby, Blake, Clute, Douthit, Galvin, Gannett, Hosmer, Miss Hultin, C. J. K. Jones and J. L. Jones, Judy, Doctor Livermore, Miller, Milsted, Miss Murdock, Snyder, Sunderland, Thayer, Utter; among the laymen, Messrs. Caldwell, Fry, Robbins, Roche, Sprigg, and Mrs. Brotherton,

Miss Dunning and Mrs. Leonard. Doubtless we have forgotten some whom others might remember first. It soon grew evident that there were three parties in the Conference: (1) those who wished to make Unitarianism "stand for" (i.e. implicitly condition its full fellowship upon) belief in God, worship and Christianity, as well as for the principles of freedom, fellowship, and character in religion; (2) those who, while essentially agreeing with their friends in their thought of God and Christianity, and sharing in the joy of worship, yet wished explicitly to include in the Unitarian fellowship all drawn to it by spiritual affinities, whatever their "beliefs"; (3) those who thought the whole discussion silly, futile, involving nothing of value, deciding nothing, and who therefore tried again and again to table or indefinitely postpone the whole matter.

Parts of four different sessions, we said, were given to the debate. The cross-motions called for much parliamentary skill on the part of the President of the Conference, Mr. Joseph Shippen, and from all sides praise was heartily accorded him for the clearness, dignity and fairness with which he gave his rulings and conducted us through the maze of technicalities. At the close of Wednesday afternoon the two sides of the "issue" stood facing each other embodied in two resolutions. One had been offered by Mr. Clute in words similar to those used to define the object of the American Unitarian Association:—

*Resolved*, that the primary object of this Conference is to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity.

The other, or others, had been offered by Mr. Gannett:—

*Resolved*, That the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all who wish to join it to help establish truth, and righteousness, and love in the world.

*Resolved*, That while the above expressly represents the basis and the width of our fellowship, and while the Conference has neither the wish nor the right to bind itself or any single member by a declaration of doctrines, it yet thinks some practical good may be done by setting forth in simple words the things most commonly believed to-day among us; the statement to be always open to re-statement, and to be regarded only as the thought of the majority.

*Resolved*, That to this end a Committee of five be appointed to draw up such a declaration of beliefs, to be submitted to the Conference at its next annual meeting.

These resolutions—seemingly so slightly different, and yet with that difference involving the whole issue of open fellowship among Unitarians, of religious fellowship based on ethical instead of doctrinal agreement—these resolutions, after being entrusted to a committee, who reported advice to table them, were again discussed on Thursday, both in the morning and the afternoon. Two substitute resolutions were also offered, one by Doctor Robbins, of Quincy, as follows:—

*Resolved*, That, mindful of our obligation to preserve in its purity the independent congregational system under which we live, under which Unitarianism had its birth, and to which it owes its development and growth, it is inexpedient for this body to assume to formulate anything in the nature of a creed or statement of faith, the determination of such questions being within the rightful province of each independent congregation.

The other substitute was the proposal made by Mr. Bixby that the Conference adopt by resolution parts of an editorial printed in *UNITY* of January 30, 1886, and called "Unitarianism in a Nut-Shell" (reprinted as "Unity Short Tract, No. 10.") The parts selected were presented in the following form:—

"Whereas, many people at the present day are anxious to know what Unitarianism stands for,

*Resolved*, That we, the delegates of the churches of the Western Unitarian Conference, assembled at Cincinnati, May 13, 1886, present for the information of the public the following brief statement of their past history and present position:

In this country Unitarianism came out from the Congregational churches of New England some eighty years ago, as new Protestants, asserting (1) the Supremacy of Character above Belief in Religion; (2) the Rights of Reason in the use of the Bible Revelation; (3) the Dignity, as against the Depravity, of Human Nature; (4) the Unity, not the Trinity, of God; the Divinity, not Deity, of Christ; and that



Christ was sent as teacher to save us from our sins, not as substitute to save us from the penalties of sin.

They have no "creed" in the usual sense; that is, no articles of belief which bind their churches and fix conditions of their fellowship.

They have religious beliefs, however, and for the most part hold these beliefs in common. With a few exceptions they may be called Christian theists; theists, as worshipping the One-in-All, and naming that One, "God, our Father"; Christian, because revering Jesus as the greatest of the historic prophets of religion; these names, as names, receiving more stress in their older than in their younger churches.

All names that divide "Religion" are to us of little consequence compared with *it*. Whoever loves Truth and lives the Good is, in a broad sense, of our religious fellowship.

One by one the speeches, motions, votes moved on across endeavors to postpone and to adjourn, until the two original resolutions were again reached. Faces grew tired and tense with the strain. The sunset shadows were darkening the church when at last Mr. Clute's resolution was put to vote. It was lost,—19 to 31. Then Mr. Gannett's first resolution: it was carried,—34 to 10. Then Dr. Robbins's: it was lost—19 to 20. Then Mr. Gannett's second and third: they, too, were lost,—20 to 24. And then—it seemed the natural close—all gathered for a moment side by side, and, with a quiet word of prayer and the name of God in our hearts, we went out.

What, then, is the result? This,—that the western Unitarians, so far as their Conference of accredited delegates can speak for them, declare by large majority that for them the Unitarian name and fellowship are not conditioned on intellectual ideas, but on moral ideals and spiritual affinities. However great, however dear, their "doctrinal" beliefs, however deep their faith in them, not these for them shall constitute the bond of union.—We are *not* of those who think such declaration of spiritual liberty a trifling matter as to subject, or futile as to influence. The Unitarian body is very small, and we in the west are a very small part of it: *because* we are so small, we must stand for the very highest things in religion, for a faith so live and daring that it shall rend all words that try insistingly to rim it,—or else there is no service in us for the world. As the prophet church we may be little and yet be mighty to serve. But to be the prophet church, the spiritualizing impulse in us must forever take precedence of the organizing impulse. "Not in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth", must be now and again the word for us, whatever consequences that word brings. We fully expect this action of our Conference to be misunderstood and misrepresented, and by brothers of our blood as well as by outsiders, should these last notice us at all. If already it has been by any one reported widely in the east that our western ministers, who pray and preach and print their thought so freely week by week and year by year, are denying "God" and losing reverence for "Christ",—then much more will it be reported now. That consequence we face without a particle of fear. In truth we face it with a holy joy; for we will turn this issue and its consequences into something for which the very men who have forced it on us, and we, shall yet exchange thanks with one another. This higher liberty is sign of deepening, not of shallowing, faith among us,—sign of the incoming, not the ebbing, of the Spirit in our hearts and in our churches. And we who know it so can well afford to bear reproach till others see it.—This, then, for result of the resolution passed at Cincinnati.

Personally, we should have been glad had the second and third resolutions attached to the one passed been adopted also, though we think the practical importance of such confederated statements of belief is exaggerated by the friends who feel their need. It was noteworthy that some of those most strenuous for *implicit* declarations of beliefs, such as Mr. Sunderland and Mr. Clute were advocating, voted against this proposition, so well guarded, to state them *explicitly*, apparently feeling that the rights of individuals and congregations were somehow invaded by it. They may be right; but we suspect that that which involves all the

creed-dangers, *prior* to absolute adoption of the open fellowship, becomes *upon* that basis safe; and that the more liberty we Unitarians have and give, the more free we shall feel to express together our convictions. We have never quite dared to speak together, because we have never fully dared to think apart. When we are all more wonted to such liberty as we have just won in Cincinnati, Unitarians may ring out their "We believes" as never yet.

A word of the elections. The nominations were presented and voted on prior to the last discussion of the resolutions. The nominating committee presented for the Secretary's office the names of two candidates, Mr. Sunderland and Mr. Effinger. Mr. Jennings was also nominated for the office from the floor. Mr. Sunderland withdrew his name, and Mr. Jennings his. The vote stood,—we believe we have the figures right,—Mr. Effinger, 47; Mr. Sunderland, 19; Mr. Jennings, 12. The whole list of officers elected is as follows:

*President*, Joseph Shippen.

*Vice-president*, S. S. Hunting.

*Secretary*, J. R. Effinger.

*Treasurer*, J. B. Galloway.

*Directors for three years*: J. R. Effinger, J. B. Galloway, T. G. Milsted, Horace Badger, J. Ll. Jones, David Utter, F. L. Hosmer.

W. C. G.

#### BIRTHDAY WORDS.

It is not years that make the man,  
But self-control and high resolves—  
Courage, the face of right to scan—  
On these the search for truth devolves.

The wide world opens all its doors—  
Before you enter, pray you choose,  
For knowledge may have varied stores,  
Yet miss of wisdom's choicest hues.

Not always best enjoyment flows  
Where wit sarcastic congregates;  
The quiet worth of goodness grows  
Upon the soul that contemplates.

Companions that we seek are ours  
Is true of thought as well as friend;  
To cultivate the highest powers  
The good and pure an influence lend.

Look for the good with reverent mind—  
Make this of life a daily part;  
It is the happiness you'd find  
To fill with hope the struggling heart.

M. H. W. W.

CHICAGO.

#### Correspondence.

DEAR UNITY:—As you are interested in all work of this kind, you may like a report of the sixth annual meeting of the Women's Social Science Club of Kansas and Western Missouri, held in Ottawa, May 5 and 6. Though the attendance was not quite as large as usual, there was no lack of zeal and earnestness, and the papers read were quite up to the general standard. There was also greater freedom of discussion than usual, and the intensest interest was roused by questions of practical importance, as the following: "Is Life worth living on a dollar-and-a-half a day?", "Shall Women Receive a Business Education?", "Manual Training; a Check to Pauperism", "Boycotts and Strikes". There seemed to be a deep appreciation of the importance of these questions and an earnest, thoughtful desire to solve them. For a few moments the "Dollar-and-a-half-a-day" discussion became an experience meeting, as recalling the dear home of childhood or of



early married life, one after another told how she had found happiness and all that makes life really worth the living on less than this, and finally our president, an accomplished teacher and easy writer, stepped from the desk to tell how she was one of twelve children, her father a minister with a salary only \$300!

Wednesday evening the meeting was opened to all, and the two papers read were upon manual training, after which it was decided to memorialize our state board of education, requesting that it be made a part of our public school system; and "The Old School and the New in Fiction", Howells being regarded as the representative of the new school, in which delineation of character, rather than intricacy of plot, is the object. Wednesday the members of the Ottawa Monday Afternoon Club gave the Social Science Club a banquet, served in the vestry of the church. Thursday morning carriages were in attendance to carry us to points of interest, and we found Ottawa to be a pretty city of some 9,000 people, with many handsome residences, and with a general appearance of life and thrift. Altogether we came away pleased with the meeting, and feeling that Kansas may congratulate herself on this body of intelligent and earnest women.

SARAH A. BROWN.

## The Some.

### KNOCKING.

Knock! knock! "Who comes here?"

What a terrible din!

Hold the door tightly,

And don't let him in.

Look from the window,

And see who is there!"

'Tis Anger, "Oh, heart,

Of this fellow beware!"

Knock! knock! "Who comes here?"

Look and see;

Out from the window,

Let no bolt go free."

Good-will stands waiting

Your favor to win;

"Then throw the door open,

And let him come in."

—Selected.

### SUSY'S FORGETTINGS.

Susy's strong point was "always forgetting". But she insisted that she "could not help it". She "had no memory", poor child. No one dared intrust an important message to her alone if there was no one who would jog her memory. "Be sure and remind Susy", was always the last charge.

She generally had a red string tied around one finger and a blue one most likely around another, to remember things by; and she used to beg mother's gold ring for the same purpose until she lost it. By great good luck, Ned found it just where she had laid it down, on a window-sill. After that she had to be content with strings for her fingers.

This is about the way it was at her house six days out of seven. If it was not one mishap, it was another.

Susy had shelled a basin about half-full of "rice pop-corn", all ready for evening, when her cousins were coming over for a candy-pull.

"This corn seems a little damp", she said to herself. "I think I will set it in the oven just a minute or two, and then it will pop splendidly to-night."

So she slipped in the tin, and turned up the damper, and went up stairs to get ready for school. In the middle of the forenoon that oven came into her mind as she stood at the blackboard working out an example. It did not help the process of solution at all. About the same time her

mother came into the kitchen to see "what could be burning". She speedily opened the oven door and all the windows. About all the corn that could pop had, and there had been a regular overflow, or spring freshet, of it in every nook and corner of the oven. To state that it was half-full now would be an exaggeration, though in a somewhat reduced state. All was quickly swept out into a big pan and thrown to the chickens, who are fond of charcoal, and must have considered this an extra entertainment. Cleansing the air of the house was not so easy.

You would have supposed, that Susy would have been shy of the oven after that, but it made no difference. The next week she put her overshoes in it, on two sticks of wood, "so as to be perfectly safe, just for a moment, to warm them through". When Ned came in, twenty minutes later, and sniffed the air of the kitchen, he, too, peered into the oven.

"My! what a good dinner we shall have! Baked overshoes are so juicy and rich!" he said to a little girl who just then came flying in. "Please reach me the tongs, sis", he added; and he fished out of the oven two shrivelled, sticky objects. Poor Susy burst into tears, and it was some time before she heard the last of her new-fashioned cookery. Ned insisted she ought to get out a new cookbook.

I have given you two samples of Susy's way, but I am glad to add that she is improving. Mother had to adopt a pretty rigorous system of discipline, and Susy finds she can help forgetting more than she ever thought she could.

—Commonwealth.

### DON'T BE TOO POSITIVE.

Boys, don't be too certain. Remember that nothing is easier than to be mistaken. And if you permit yourself to be so very positive in your mistakes a great many times, everybody will lose confidence in what you say. Never make a positive statement unless you *know* it is as you say. If you have any doubts, or if there is room for any, remove the possibility by examination before speaking, or speak cautiously. *Don't be too certain.*

"John where is the hammer?"

"It is in the corn crib."

"No, it is not there: I have just been looking there."

"Well, I know it is. I saw it there not half an hour ago."

"If you saw it there it must be there, of course. But suppose you go and fetch it."

John goes to the corn crib and presently returns with a small axe in his hand.

"O, it was the axe I saw. The handle was sticking out from a half bushel measure. I thought it was the hammer."

But you said positively that you did see the hammer, not that you thought you saw it. There is a great difference between the two answers. Do not permit yourself to make a positive statement even about a small matter unless you are quite sure; for if you do you will find the habit growing upon you, and by and by you will begin to make loose replies to questions of great importance. *Don't be too certain.*

—Selected.

A WISE CONCLUSION.—His complexion was black, his name was Crow, he was a white-washer and he spoke as follows: "When I fust begun dis hyar business, I 'lowed dat I could do white-washin' 'bout as well as de nex' pusson. I 'cured a tolabul good bresh an' foun' a job. When I got done wid de ceilin' de man ob de house said, 'Is you frew in dar?' I tole 'im, I reckoned I war. 'What you charge?' 'Fifty cents, sah', an' what you b'lieve he done said? 'I'd a gib you fifty cents to hab let it alone'. I 'lowed de mat-tah mout be de bresh, so I went an' 'cured a heap finah one, but de secon' job war no bettah dan de fust. Den, chile, I come to de 'clushun DERE WAR SUMFIN DE MATTAH WID ME."

R. E.



## Notes from the Field.

OUR FELLOWSHIP OF MERCY.—The returns are steadily coming in from all parts of the country. The editor of the *Journal of Education* of St. Louis writes: "Press this right along. It is the right thing to do, from a political, commercial, humane, and religious standpoint", and he sends the names of two gentlemen and two ladies, in recognition of their duty. Thirty-four names come from Clarence, Iowa, ladies and gentlemen, signing both "Recognitions". Through the *Illinois Humane Journal* office come the names of ten ladies. From Northboro', Mass., three men and three women, with this surprising and depressing word from our correspondent, "I am ashamed to send so meagre a list, and am much astonished and utterly saddened to find almost all women and girls refuse to sign; but we will not be disheartened but trust to our little leaven. From Englewood and Normal Park we have received the names of 41 women. Tomah, Wis., sends 28 names. Six names come from Peru, Fla. A German friend from St. Louis sends 52 names, largely of his fellow countrymen, selected from among the working classes, clerks, mechanics, and servant girls. Children were excluded on principle, and our brother asks some pertinent questions, which we will try to make room for in a subsequent number. We have received but one list from Boston direct with but three names upon it, but from Concord, the home of the prophets, we have received the master roll, ten feet long, containing 411 signatures, men and women, and our correspondent says: "Although the names are subscribed somewhat irregularly as to position, still all of them, I think, intend and would wish to be understood as indorsing all that would be required under the heads of both columns. Among these names are many that have a national familiarity. We find the names Abel Hosmer, 90 years old, Sallie P. Hosmer, 91 years old, Madame Prescott, 83 years old, Frances Hunt, 79 years, Lillian Emerson, 83 years, Miss Aphia Turner, 95 years, Sarah Conant, 84 years, David Buttrick, 85 years, Maria Wood, 89 years, Mrs. Jacob Farmer, 80 years, Lydia Ballou, 83 years, Reuben Rice, 95 years, not to say anything of several others in the earlier 70's, the ages of which our correspondent has jotted in the margin. Where but from Concord, the home of Thoreau, the great bird lover, and of Emerson, the author of the "Tit-Mouse",

"This atom in full breath  
Hurling defiance at vast death",

could such a list come? We have hung this roll of honor upon the walls of our UNITY workshop, that by its length as well as weight it may plead for the humanities.

HUMBOLDT, IOWA.—The annual meeting of the Unity society at this place, held the first Monday evening in May, was made an occasion of social and literary enjoyment as well as one of business importance. A free supper was served at the church to all its members and friends who could find it convenient to be present. Following this hour of festive entertainment came the election of officers, appointment of committees and other business transactions, among which was the unanimous and enthusiastic adoption of the following resolutions, which speak for themselves:

*Resolved*, That we recognize in Reverend Marion Murdock a most earnest and faithful spiritual and religious teacher, whose zealous, untiring work in the promotion of truth, building of character and development of the best in humanity is made doubly effective from the fact that the high ideals of purity, nobility, and strength of purpose urged and portrayed in her teachings are fully sustained by example in her own character and daily life. And

*Resolved*, That in testimony of this recognition and our appreciation of these sterling qualities, we hereby most cordially and earnestly solicit her to continue our pastor

for the coming year, hoping that we may not for many years see the relationship severed.

Miss Murdock responded in a few well chosen words indicating that the satisfactory experience manifested in the foregoing resolutions had been mutual. The evening's exercises closed with a brief literary and musical entertainment. The spirit and enthusiasm evinced throughout shows that the soul in the work "is still marching on" in Humboldt.  
G. S. G.

CHICAGO.—At the union meeting of Sunday-school teachers on May 17, the subject was the 19th Psalm. Mr. Jones, the leader, said that a great change has come over the views about the Bible and the comprehension of it among our liberal churches within ten years past. More and more the Bible is taking its place in literature just as Shakespeare does, because the old confusing and distorting discussions about the Bible as an infallible authority or as a supernatural revelation have faded and gone. Psalm 19 glorifies first nature, then the law, that is the Mosaic law. This double glorification runs all through the psalms. It is the proof and the consequence of the Jew's devotion to his religious forms and requirements as commanded by Javeh and expressing his majesty and goodness; also, of the idea of Javeh's supremacy in nature also, and of his providence both present and past. As to the verses about nature, Mr. Jones compared the 29th and 104th Psalms. We put into the part that glorifies the law a larger meaning than it had to the contemporary Hebrew. This is inevitable and useful. Understood in the larger way, there is no break in the Psalm: the transition there is natural and easy, from the beauty and grandeur of nature to the laws and providence of the Creator. Present, 25.

DAKOTA.—Sunday evening, the 2d inst., it was my privilege to address a very fair audience, considering the brief notice of the meeting, of some of the most intelligent and influential people of Huron. In this very thrifty railway center I discovered liberal material enough, if it could be organized into united public activity, for a society whose humane influence and beneficent power would far exceed all others. But the tract called for in another place is needed for circulation here, as well as everywhere else. —The articles on the Unitarian name in the *Christian Register* of April 29 and May 6, richly repay reading. The brief quotation from Dr. Ezra Stiles Gannett on character as the supreme thing is very pertinent. Character—this is the grand word, including in its profound depth and comprehension breadth, freedom, fellowship, and religion too! The concluding sentence of those articles, expressing the writer's conception of the import of Unitarianism, is brim-full of significance.  
A. A. R.

BOSTON.—A portrait of Keshub Chunder Sen will be placed in the Town Hall, Calcutta. Another will be placed in Albert Hall in the same city. —It is expected that the industrial branch of cookery will be accepted next fall by our city school committee as a regular study in our public schools. —The J. J. Audubon society for the protection of wild birds from destruction for commercial purposes is already working very successfully in staying the millinery trade in bird plumage. —The opening of the new Unitarian building is postponed till the middle of June, in consequence of withdrawal of striking mechanics. It is very fortunate that no delay was permitted by the building committee in raising funds or in their contracts. In the present year the money could not be gathered or the building contracts be made.  
E. R. B.

CALIFORNIA.—As a matter of course when word comes from C. W. Wendte on the Pacific coast it is one full of energy and hopefulness. "I find my mission more promising than I had anticipated." His presence enables Doctor Stebbins to obtain the needed rest that a three-months' visit eastward will give him, Mr. Wendte supplying his pulpit meanwhile in San Francisco.